

CLAIMS:

1. A substantially non-toxic fraction isolated from snake venom having the characteristics of a fraction purified from said venom by Mono Q ion-exchange chromatography, wherein said fraction has an analgesic effect after a lag period, and wherein said snake is selected from the group of snake families consisting of *Atractaspidae*, *Elapidae*, *Crotolidae*, *Hydrophidae* and *Viperidae*, with the exception of *Vipera xanthina*.
2. A fraction according to Claim 1 wherein said chromatography is carried out on a Mono Q column in 20mM Tris-HCl buffer pH 7.0, and the fraction elutes at 12-28 minutes.
3. A fraction according to Claim 1 wherein said *Crotolidae* is *Crotalus adamanteus*.
4. A fraction according to Claim 1 wherein said *Elapidae* is *Naja melanoleuca*.
5. A product obtained from the fraction of Claim 1 which retains said properties of the fraction.
6. A derivative of the product of Claim 5 which retains said properties of the fraction of Claim 1.
7. Use of a fraction according to Claim 1 in the preparation of a pharmaceutical composition for use as an analgesic acting after a lag period.
8. A pharmaceutical composition for use as an analgesic comprising a substantially non-toxic fraction according to Claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or excipient.
9. A pharmaceutical composition according to Claim 8 for topical administration.
10. A pharmaceutical composition according to Claim 8 for parenteral administration.
11. A pharmaceutical composition according to Claim 8 for the treatment of pain.

- 19
12. A method for the relief of pain of a subject comprising administering to said subject a substantially non-toxic fraction according to Claim 1.
13. A method according to Claim 12 wherein said fraction is topically administered.
- 5 14. A method for isolating a substantially non-toxic fraction from snake venom, wherein said fraction has an analgesic effect, comprising applying whole venom to an ion exchange column and eluting the fraction with an aqueous buffer, wherein said snake is selected from the group of snake families consisting of *Atractaspidae*, *Elapidae*, *Crotolidae*, *Hydrophidae* and *Viperidae*,
10 with the exception of *Vipera xanthina*.
15. A method according to Claim 14 wherein said column is a Mono Q ion-exchange column.
16. A method according to Claim 15 wherein said column is eluted with a Tris-HCl buffer or with an ammonium acetate buffer.
- 15 17. A method according to Claim 16 wherein the concentration of said buffer is 20mM and the pH is in the range of 6.8-7.5.
18. A method according to Claim 17 wherein said fraction elutes at 12-28 minutes.